

Protocol for Handling Suspicious Substance Calls to 911 Center

1) Call taking procedures:

- a. If a package or a letter, who sent it?
 - Has the package or letter been opened?
 - What does it look like?
 - Is there anything on the outside of the package/letter? (i.e. powder, substance staining, or leaking.)?
- b. Did you receive any threats with this package or letter?
- c. Where is the package or letter now?
- d. Who else has had contact with the package or letter?

5) Call taking procedures involving possible exposure to suspicious substance:

- a. Why do you think you have been exposed?

Symptoms? Yes _____ No _____

(If yes, send appropriate medical response according to EMD procedures.)

- b. How were you exposed?
- c. When were you exposed?

3) Pre-arrival instructions:

- Lay the letter or package down on flat surface.
- Make sure all fans are turned off.
- Lay something over the letter/package until responders arrive (newspaper—sheet of plastic etc)
- Have anyone who may have had contact with the letter/package wash with soap and water.
- Leave the area of the letter/package and wait for responders to arrive.
- If clothing was exposed or had contact, wash as normal but separate from other laundry.
- Provide assurance about the low risk for infection without known exposure and education about anthrax as an agent in bio-terrorism.

8) Dispatching Procedures:

- a. Dispatch designated law enforcement officer to call for service and utilize appropriate signal.
- b. Advise the responder that they are responding to a suspicious substance/package. **(Do not use the word Anthrax on the radio.)**
- i. Advise of the details concerning the situation, particularly if there is any threat involved.
- j. Dispatch EMS units if exposure to substance requires. **(Utilize EMD procedures for any medical needs.)**

THREAT:

If the caller advises that the suspicious package/substance was accompanied by a “threat” utilize the following protocols recommended by F.B.I.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation should be notified at 404-679-9000 if the following circumstances are present. (24/7)

1. **The letter/package with material present (opened/unopened), e.g. powder covered, substance staining or leaking.**
2. **A threat accompanies the letter or package (material need not be present).**

**** If these factors are evident, the FBI will provide further investigative instructions at the telephone number above for collecting evidence and maintaining the proper chain of custody. In addition, FBI field offices are establishing procedures for screening letters/packages that have not been screened by state and local hazmat personnel, or the FBI, on scene.**

IF threat is reported then appropriate HazMat team or competent trained and equipped personnel should be dispatched to assist in the safe collection and preparation for transport of the suspected substance/package.

